



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

231 Capitol Avenue • Hartford, Connecticut 06106



KENDALL F. WIGGIN
State Librarian
TEL: (860) 757-6510 - FAX: 757-6503

**Testimony of Kendall Wiggin
State Librarian
Connecticut State Library
Concerning Raised Bill 5124**

**"An Act Concerning the Preservation of Historical Records and Access to Restricted
Records in the State Archives"
Committee on Government Administration and Elections – Public Hearing
February 19, 2014**

Good morning Senator Musto, Representative Jutila and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. My name is Kendall Wiggin and I am the State Librarian.

Since 1855 the Connecticut State Library has acquired historical records from the three branches of State government. In 1909, the General Assembly made the State Library the official State Archives. The Archives contains more than 41,000 cubic feet of records documenting the evolution of state public policy and its implementation, the rights and claims of citizens, and the history of Connecticut and its people.

In recent years, exemptions to the Freedom Of Information statutes have created barriers and confusion over access to historical records in the State Archives. When exemptions are created, there is often little consideration given to the records' future historical importance and to allowing access to the record after a reasonable amount of time. Establishing a uniform time period for accessing records, as is the case in many states and with the National Archives, increases transparency and improves agency efficiency. Raised Bill 5124 would address our concerns regarding access to government records by lifting any restrictions 75 years after the creation of the record.

The State Archives also holds a variety of records, including medical records from various state institutions. While these records have great historical significance, access to them raises many privacy issues. Structuring any law to deal with these historical records will have to take into consideration these privacy issues.

My office welcomes the opportunity to work with the GAE to craft legislation that enables the State Library to carry out its mission to preserve and make accessible Connecticut's history and heritage while protecting the privacy of its citizens.